

First Peter 3:3-4  
Godward Principles of Marriage part 2

Purpose: to help all Christian women understand appropriate Godward attire

Introduction: This addresses **HOW** women are to dress to demonstrate submission and live a lifestyle of purity and awe referred to in 3:1-2.

- 1) What the Spirit says about attire through Paul in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10
  - a) Appropriate/suitable attire—καταστολή κόσμιος
    - i) What is appropriate to the situation, especially a congregational setting; what is well-arranged and moderate; being appropriate for winning approval according to accepted standards of what is proper
  - b) With modesty—αἰδώς (cf. Hebrews 12:28 “reverence”)
    - i) Unpretentious, reserved, an awareness of a sense of shame; the opposite of treating something in a common or ordinary manner; the attitude that precedes and prevents an unworthy and shameful act; that innate moral repugnance of doing something dishonorable
  - c) With self-control—σωφρονσύνη
    - i) Characterized by the ability to restrain one’s passions and impulses; decency; sensible; to exercise care and intelligence appropriate to the circumstances; to be discrete; inner self-government
  - d) With good works—ἔργον ἀγαθός
    - i) Works that are beneficial to others
  - e) Christian modesty is mostly a heart attitude, but outward clothing does matter as well. You can normally tell
- 2) What are the Christian wives to focus on?—3:3-4 <sup>3</sup> *whose (wives’) adornment* [κόσμος] *is to be* [pres. act. impv. εἰμί]...
  - a) What is adornment? κόσμος is the root of the English word cosmetics
    - i) To arrange in an orderly fashion so as to be attractive
    - ii) Be attractive without being an attraction.
  - b) Who is responsible for her adornment? **She** is, not her husband
    - i) As the Spirit teaches through Paul—1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9 “adorn themselves”
    - ii) As the Spirit teaches through Peter—1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:5 “were adorning themselves”
- 3) Negatively: what her adornment should **not** focus on—not [οὐ] *merely outward* [ἐξωθεν] (superficial display of wealth with things that are eventually replaced)
  - a) Hair—*elaborate braiding of the hair* [ἐμπλοκή θρίξ]—
  - b) Accessories—*and wearing gold jewelry* [περίθεις χρυσίον]—
  - c) Clothing—*or putting on outer garments* [ἐνδύεις ἱμάτιον]—
    - These seem to indicate the wealthier segment of women in their society
    - If you are known for your outward appearance only, something is wrong.

- 4) Positively: what her adornment **should** focus on—<sup>4</sup> *but* [ἀλλά] *the inward person of the heart* [κρυπτός ἄνθρωπος καρδία] *with* [ἐν] *the incorruptible* [ἄφθαρτος] (qualities consisting) of ...
- a) Spiritual ornaments—*the spirit* [πνεῦμα]
    - i) *non-assertive* [πραῦς]—the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest; this stems from trust in God’s goodness and control over the situation.
    - ii) *and tranquil* [ἡσυχίος]—calm, peace and quiet, well-ordered, restful, without turmoil, undisturbed
      - (1) The opposite of: being disturbed or agitated, being anxious
      - (a) It stems from not poking your nose into things that are not your concern
  - b) Valuable ornaments before God—*which* (spirit) *is* [pres. act. ind. εἰμί] *very precious* (highly valuable) [πολυτελής] *in the presence of* [ἐνώπιον] *God* [θεός].
    - i) God sees all and knows all. He is the God who searches the heart (1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 28:9).
    - ii) This sounds like an echo of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:7: Yahweh does not view the things the way men do. People look at the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks at the heart.”
  - c) These things give evidence that the fleshly self has been dethroned and that Christ rules in your heart. It gives evidence that, by God’s grace, you now desire to know and to draw near to God, to seek and find God, to love and honor God, to serve and please God. It is now the controlling motive around which the whole of your life is rebuilt. This is evidence of the new birth.
    - i) The Christian woman who thinks and says, “No one can tell me what to wear” is reflecting a fleshly mindset that dishonors God.
  - d) What a person is on the inside does not remain hidden, but manifests itself in the way a wife behaves in everyday life.
  - e) How you dress and why you wear what you wear are always done in the very presence of a holy God.
- 5) Summary and applications
- a) Women:
    - i) Follow these principles for the glory of God, even if your husband never changes. What is your motive for attempting to be a Christ-like wife? Is it to honor God or to only get a “better husband”?
      - (1) Don’t be afraid to follow Christ, even if your husband does not. See Hebrews 11:6.
    - ii) Peter addresses several characteristics (8?) of a godly wife:
      - (1) Submission, purity, awe of God, non-assertiveness, tranquility, obedience, doing good, not being intimidated
      - (2) Young ladies, set these things as your goals for womanhood.
  - b) Men:
    - i) Pray for your wife that she would be like this.

- (1) Young men, look for a young woman who is pursuing these things. If she is not, run the other way really fast.
  - ii) Live with your wife in an understanding way. These are the battles she faces in her Christian walk. Walk graciously with her.
- **Take-home truth:** God's grace enables Godward attire